
The MCA Advisory

The Newsletter of Medal Collectors of America

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Board Members

John W. Adams, President
John Sallay, Vice President, jsallay@comcast.net
Barry D. Tayman, Treasurer
David T. Alexander, davida@stacks.com
Robert F. Fritsch, bobfritsch@earthlink.net
David Menchell, dmenchell@aol.com
Scott Miller, wheatabix@comcast.net
Ira Rezak, ira.rezak@med.va.gov
Donald Scarinci, dscarinci1@aol.com
Michael Turrini, emperori@juno.com
Benjamin Weiss, Webmaster

John W. Adams, Editor

99 High Street, 11th floor
Boston, MA 02110
john.adams@canaccordadams.com

Barry Tayman, Treasurer

3115 Nestling Pine Court
Ellicott City, MD 21042
bdtayman@verizon.net

Benjamin Weiss, Webmaster

benweiss.org@comcast.net

Website: medalcollectors.org

Editor of Collectors' Guide, Dick Johnson
(dick.johnson@snet.net)

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MCA Calendar

November 13-16 th	C4 Convention - Boston
January 7-11 th	New York International
January 10 th	MCA Meeting at NYI

What's New on Our Website!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE EVERY MONTH

From the Editor

Tony Lopez has rebelled against the establishment, challenging the validity of “The 100 Greatest U.S. Medals and Tokens.” To begin with, he questions the value of putting the Libertas Americana in the same category as a political badge. There are elements in common—e.g. the historical dimension for one and the eccentricity of the collectors for another—but Tony’s basic point is well taken. If there is enough member response, he has volunteered to work on a list of “100 Greatest Medals only.” Therefore, we seek your thoughts on additions to the list (and subtractions). To this end, we volunteer the Daniel Morgan medal, engraved by Augustin Dupré. How this medal could be left off any list, representing as it does near perfection in technique, is a mystery to us. Let’s hear a whole lot more suggestions and comments.

David Menchell has an excellent article on Peace of Breda medals in the C-4 newsletter. I commend a subscription to this Journal—only \$20, sent to Charlie Rohrer, P.O. Box 25, Mountville, PA 17554—and also commend their annual convention in Boston. This year, the dates are November 13th thru the 16th. If enough of you emailed me of your intention to be here on the Friday or the Saturday of the convention, I would attempt to organize an MCA lunch, dinner or drinks.

January Calendar

The New York International show in January has long been a fixture on our calendar. This year’s event will be enriched by a naming ceremony at the ANS Library on Friday the 9th, an important book auction by George Kolbe on Saturday the 10th and Stacks’ Americana Sale on Tuesday the 13th and Wednesday the 14th. The Stacks’ agenda will include the auction of the John Weston Adams Collection of colonial Indian peace medals as well as documents related thereto. Last but by

no means least, MCA will have its regular meeting on Saturday the 10th. This gathering will include a panel chaired by John Sallay on “Technology and Numismatics.”

Muthandel Verschoor

(by John W. Adams)

This Netherlands-based firm was started in 1984 by the brothers Dim and Henk Verschoor. It handles a variety of numismatic material but, of most interest to MCA members, it posts a regular listing of historical medals.

The proprietors have a deep knowledge of the subject and, in particular, Dutch medals from the 16th century forward. When asked whether the Betts 26 in stock was Milford Haven 513 or 514, we received the following response:

John,

Now the somewhat more complicated question. Which variety of Milford Haven? In answering this question we must note that the reverse of number 513 is mixed with the reverse of number 514. So MH.513/MH.514 reverse. I will speak about this medal later.

MH.514/MH.513 reverse comes with two reverse dies, one with and one without an horizon, the composition derived after the reverse of the medals of Tromp/de Ruyter etc. by Muller which on their turn came from a contemporary etching with as subject the Battle of Duins. This is the medal I show on the website. Three years ago I sold the one with the horizon, and, on the web, one without the horizon. I will send a photo to you to show the difference in a separate email. The Riviere piece was with an horizon.

Now MH.513/MH.514 reverse. This variety was published in a Dutch numismatic magazine in 1954. The observe after a painting in the “Rijksmuseum” of J. Daemen Cool. The totally different reverse is after an etching published in a book by J. Commelin with the

title Life of Frederic Henry published in Amsterdam in 1651. However this etching was derived from an earlier one of Claes Jansz. Visscher also published in Amsterdam.

All in all there are two obverse dies, with the chain as the obvious different feature and three reverse dies. The maker is still unknown.

Regards,

Dim Verschoor

When asked about the symbolism on Betts 21, Dim replied:

1602. HOLLAND RIVALS SPAIN FOR THE NEW WORLD.*By J. Wittewaal.*

Obv. Horse leaping into the New World, the device of Philips II, pursued by the Lion of Dutch Zeeland. On a scroll: NON SVFFICIT ORBIS this part was the motto of Philips II of Spain meaning: One world is not enough. The second part QVO.SALTAS INSEQVAR stands for: where ever you leap I will follow. With castle for the mint in Middelburg. Rev. Dutch warships outmanoeuvre the Spanish galleon San Lago off St. Helena in 1601. Legend: POSSVNT QVÆ POSSE VIDENTVR.16 MARTY. 1602.To do whatever seems possible.16 March 1602. Betts 21; v.L.I.564/548; JMP 1953.97; silver,51 mm., 45.74 grams.

The Spanish treasure ship Sint Jacob was captured off the Island of St. Helena by two ships of the State of Zeeland, on its return from Sumatra, under the command of Gerard de Roy and Laurents Bikker. The booty recovered in jewels and silks amounted to about one and a half millions guilders. This medal was commissioned by the owners of the two Dutch merchantmen.

Tony Lopez Baltimore ANA Report

Attending the 2008 Baltimore ANA show was much anticipated by me as it was the first East Coast major show I was to attend in over four decades of collecting. I ended up in a major crunch logistically between daycare issues, and a long planned family trip to Disneyland, which was set to begin Friday of the ANA show. Basically, I knew I would have only 2 days, Wednesday and Thursday, to visit the show, trying to beat the numerous MCA and TAMS members to the bourse offerings. By catching two red-eye flights, I would add Tuesday to my Baltimore trip.

During the show, I also planned on attending the Manly Medal presentation by George Fuld, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium, and most important, of course, the MCA meeting.

First of all, let me comment on the bourse. By and large, I got beat out. Many of the dealers who had medals to offer warned me that they had already been “picked through”. They also told me that it had been a very successful show selling medals. I was excited to meet in person a number of the important dealers I had known about or bought from and dealt with for many years, including John Kraljevich, Tony Terranova, and Paul Bosco. Both Tony and John bemoaned the fact that by having a table at the show, they were too tied up to go to the meetings to see their colleagues, particularly those at the MCA meeting. In Tony’s own words, referring to the MCA members “Those guys are great, I love those guys!”

Some of the “old timers” were hit by “sticker-shock” when they saw the prices being asked. I was not as surprised, since our area of collecting has always been extremely under-priced when compared to coin collecting in terms of rarity, beauty, and historical significance. Medal collecting is getting much more attention in the numismatic press, especially *Coin World*, *the Numismatist*, and

also by the recent mainstream release of Jaeger/Bower's "*100 Greatest American Tokens and Medals*" and Katherine Jaegers "*A Guide Book of Tokens and Medals*."

One example of the huge discrepancy in pricing in our hobby was demonstrated by two beautiful large format 70mm silver George II "Royal Family" medals (MI 500/47) which I found on the bourse, two rows apart. Both medals were basically AU, with little noteworthy difference in their condition. One dealer was asking \$1750.00, and the other dealer, from England, was asking £3800.00, roughly \$7500.00 USD. Two rows, and over four times the asking price! Incidentally, Baldwin's had a similar medal offered in their May 4, 2005 Auction # 41, Lot 1488 estimated at £1800-£2200, which did not sell. Yes, I did fight off the temptation to buy it from the one dealer, and try to sell it to the other.

In the end, I ended up with only two medals. The first is a 1784 "Franklin Genius" medal in copper, struck with the original obverse die, and a replacement reverse die, with a pointing hand privy mark indicating an 1845-1860 Paris strike. As mentioned by Adams-Bentley in "*Comitia Americana*" the 1784 Franklin medal's allegorical "winged genius" reverse is far superior artistically to the 1786 reverse with only an inscription enclosed by a wreath. It is difficult to ascertain why the Paris mint commonly struck the Franklin medal with the unimpressive 1786 reverse. Adams/Bentley's census shows only two copper originals of "winged genius" and those with the original obverse and second reverse are also extremely rare. I would guess there are less than ten examples extant.

The second medal was quite a surprise, found in the "Budget Coins" section of the bourse. The obverse is the same as the other Franklin medal, but an obvious later restrike die, in early 20th century yellow bronze. The edge has a cornucopia privy mark, and the word "BRONZE", indicating a post 1880 strike. When I turned the medal over, I was

astonished to discover an unexpected reverse revealing the exact year of striking. There was a 20th century reverse inscription with modern lettering celebrating "**FRANKLIN DAY/JANUARY 17th/1927**", and a surrounding legend "**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN FRANCE**". The 141 year juxtaposition through history and medallic artistic styling between the obverse and reverse of this medal is one of the most dramatic I have ever seen.

I also bought a copy of Medallic Illustrations from Charles Davis, and Bill Swoger's new reference "*NATIONAL COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA*". Bill Swoger is to be commended for an incredible undertaking, and particularly for privately publishing the reference work. It is well worth the \$225.00 price tag.

In all, I spent around three hours on the bourse floor, and half of that was socializing. I did manage to check out the exhibits on display, and was very pleased to find medal collecting was well represented. My general impression was that the medallic offerings on the bourse floor were extensive, and the prices were very strong, but the demand was also very high, so the merchandise was definitely moving. If I had another day to scour the bourse, I am certain my wallet would have come away much lighter.

Dr. George Fuld's presentation on the Manley medal was excellent. The depth of his knowledge and his thorough approach to research is truly inspiring. His census data was surprising; he accounts for 17 examples in silver, much greater than the auction estimate of "less than five" commonly seen. George examined the history of the medal, and of particular significance was the attestation of many civic leaders as to the accuracy of the image of Washington, including Governors' Thomas Mifflin and George Clinton. These testaments were printed in contemporary newspapers, and it was unclear as to whether it

was actually advertising or news. Were Mifflin, Clinton, and the others early paid celebrity endorsers?

David Menchell suggested that the unflattering bust of Washington seen on the Manley medal may in fact accurately represent Washington's actual appearance, as attested. Many of the contemporary artistic representations by Gilbert Stuart, Jean-Antoine Houdin and members of the Peale family were likely stylized in order to give Washington a more handsome appearance. This was news to me! Decades of affection for the good-looking dollar-bill version of Washington began to crumble before my eyes! I had never heard this theory before (or even considered it), but David knows his stuff, and qualified his conclusions, which seemed to have been supported by George Fuld. While it may have caused me some immense personal psychological damage, the presentation and discussion pointed to the fact that medal collectors are indeed an erudite lot, seeking to discover the unaltered contemporary truth that exists underneath the flawed "history book" versions of our past.

I missed half of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium, stuck in traffic Thursday morning only a few blocks from the Baltimore Convention Center. Syd Martin and David Lange both gave an interesting account of the many steps involved in having numismatic works published. The bottom line was something many of us are aware of; numismatic writing is a labor of love; you will share knowledge, but you will likely never get rich as a numismatic author. I had seen David Lange's book on Coin Boards at a Santa Clara show over a year ago, and while I had little previous interest in the subject matter, nostalgia and the beautiful photography in the book made me buy a copy instantly; so I am a fan. Hearing all of the steps involved in producing the book only increased my admiration for Lange and other numismatic authors who are adding to the important legacy of knowledge in our hobby.

I will admit that I receive the NBS e-sylum, but am not an official member. (Sorry John.) Becoming a member of the NBS (and the MCA for that matter) requires me to print an application, fill it out, write a check, put it all in an envelope, address the envelope, seal the envelope, put on a stamp, and of course, mail the envelope. I will admit I live on a computer, and mostly on-line. I write maybe one or two checks a month (well, my wife does), and address less than 10 envelopes a year. I do have stamps, but have no idea where they are. If there was a way to apply online, and pay by Paypal, I would belong to about 100 more numismatic organizations than I do. I guess that I am being "lazy" by definition, but the truth is that I have great difficulty switching gears from my technological ways.

And so, it is significant that I actually take the time to do all of the manual labor required to maintain my membership in the MCA! I admit I've been late with my dues a few times. This brings us to the MCA meeting in Baltimore.

The meeting was well attended by a virtual who's who in medal collecting, writing, and research. As each stood up and introduced themselves, I realized this was a meeting of an extraordinary group of individuals from our hobby. Referring to those in the room as "numismatists" or "medal collectors" or "medal experts" would be unsuitable and inaccurate; in simple terms, an incredible group of history scholars were present in that room. At the head table sat John W. Adams, Barry Tayman, Dr. Benjamin Weiss, and David T. Alexander. As if this incredible group was not enough, the audience included US Naval Academy Museum Curator Jim Cheevers; Massachusetts Historical Society Numismatic Curator Anne Bentley, and notable numismatic authors and researchers Robert Julian, Katherine Jaeger, David Menchell, Don Scarinci and Chris Neuzil, to name only a few. I wish I had thought to write down the names of everyone

there; I know I have failed to mention many important attendees.

The early part of the meeting consisted primarily of business, and modesty prevents me from elaborating on some of the unexpected information revealed during this portion of the meeting. The guest speaker was James Cheevers, curator of the US Naval Academy Museum at Annapolis. Jim Cheevers is a virtual encyclopedia of information about US Naval history, and the important collection at the Naval Academy Museum. He gave us a brief overview of the collection there, and the important holdings of particular interest to medal collectors; the original John Paul Jones Comitia Americana medal dies engraved by Dupré; the gold medal struck from those original dies in 1947; the original gold Preble medal, a complete collection of Naval medals, and an extensive collection of Admiral Vernon medals. To have an individual of such great knowledge and passion at the helm of caring for these incredibly historic treasures is entirely appropriate. To have the opportunity to hear him speak about them is a rare treat indeed.

I left the meeting, quite frankly, feeling overwhelmed. I realized that membership in the Medal Collectors of America, for \$20.00 a year, is the single greatest bargain in our hobby. Perhaps the fact that we remain a “best kept secret” is the secret to our success. Our membership is not vast, but our members are gigantic in the legacy of knowledge they are creating, and in their dedication in contributing to the future of the hobby.

The third part of my trip to Baltimore, and the primary reason for my very limited time visiting the bourse floor, was the opportunity to do first-hand research in and around the Baltimore area. While I have had great success doing research using the internet and other resources it has targetted ultimately, there were a couple of unfinished projects which required me to go to Baltimore to complete my research. When I discovered that the ANA show and MCA meeting would be in

Baltimore, I knew I needed to attend, despite my tight schedule.

The specific findings of my research are still in the works, but it is worthwhile letting fellow MCA members know of the great experience I had in doing medallic research in Baltimore. One of my long term projects is a long overdue article for *the Numismatist* on the John Eager Howard Comitia Americana medal. This has led me to the Maryland Historical Society, where I have been in touch with Chris Becker for the last couple of years, and he has directed me to others at the Historical society to assist me with my project.

Ultimately, this led to a meeting on Tuesday July 29th with Director of Collections and Curator Jeannine Disviscour, and a dedicated volunteer named Patricia Roberts. Pat spent several weeks researching and “hunting down” long hidden medals in their collection for us to examine. Joining me that morning were well known medal experts David Menchell, Barry Tayman, and George Fuld. Without giving away all of the important discoveries we made, which will be properly documented in more detail in the months to come, after we had looked at 5 medals in their collection, Jeannine commented “So, basically you are telling me that we have just looked at a million dollars worth of medals?”. Of course, the Maryland Historical society was thrilled to have us show up there with our knowledge and expertise, and particularly pleased to learn that two of those in attendance were local Marylanders, Barry Tayman and George Fuld. The MCA has now built a strong relationship with the Maryland Historical Society, which should lead to many more great discoveries to come.

While I would normally be beyond satisfied after handling a million dollars worth of historic medals, my time crunch led me to Annapolis that same afternoon to meet with Donald Leonard, Registrar of the US Naval Academy Museum. The Naval Academy museum is currently closed for renovations, but

Jim Cheevers was kind enough to allow me access to their collection in order to complete research on the die progression of the John Paul Jones Comitia Americana dies. As I stated earlier, the original dies for the Jones medal are held there, along with a gold replacement medal, struck in 1947 from the original dies. The whereabouts of Jones' original gold Comitia Americana medal are unknown, and there are some who believe it was never awarded (myself excluded). I will admit, looking directly at Dupre's exquisitely detailed artistry engraved into those steel dies 220 years ago, literally gave me goose bumps. I had before me one of the great American treasures. Holding the gold medal in my hands was the experience of a lifetime. These Holy Grails of medal collecting are displayed in a sacred place, underneath St. Andrews Church at the Naval Academy, where the final remains of John Paul Jones are kept in a beautifully carved marble crypt.

Looking back at my entire three-day Baltimore experience, I can only describe it as a whirlwind, from which I have not completely recovered. Membership in the MCA is an extraordinary ticket to an incredible world full of access:

- access to some of the most remarkable and knowledgeable historians and researchers;
- access to incredible historic treasures;
- access to the real details of the actual history and events which shaped our society. If you love research, history, and knowledge, this is the place to be.

Despite all that the MCA has to offer, the greatest benefit from the MCA is the people and friendships you develop with your fellow members with similar interests. I have e-mailed John Adams frequently over the last few years, and it was a great honor to actually meet him personally, and spend time talking with him. I have also had primarily e-mail contact with David Menchell, George Fuld and John Kraljevich, and actually meeting them "in the

flesh" adds a greater dimension to my deep respect and appreciation for them as people.

For me, the single best experience from my visit to Baltimore was finally meeting Barry Tayman in person. We are old friends (and now co-authors) though we never personally met. Barry became my official "Baltimore Host" and I spent many hours visiting with him and his lovely wife. I now know where the best restaurant in Baltimore (OK, the best restaurant in the world) is, and he also reminded me how much better vinyl records sound than CD's.

And so, the most important discovery I made during my visit to Baltimore was revealed to me by Tony Terranova: "Those guys are great, I love those guys!"

[Our thanks to Medal Maven Bob Julian for submitting the following—ed.]

VARIA (by Bob Julian)

Extract of a letter from Rufus King (Minister to Great Britain) to Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott:

London, December 31, 1799.

Dear Sir,

My persuasion is, that no peace [between England and France] will be made this winter, and that the next campaign will be as vigorous and bloody as the last. I hope the *Washington*, in which, as I informed you in my letter of the 7th September, we have 2000 muskets, and some other articles of public property, may arrive safe. The *Woodrop Sims*, in which, as I also informed you in my letter of the 7th September, we had 1500 muskets, with two or three boxes, containing the dies of the Indian medals, ordered by Col. McHenry, some books, charts, and a few other small articles, has been taken [seized by a French privateer]

and carried to Bordeaux.

With sincere regards, &c, &c.

Rufus King.

[Does this mean that John Adams deserves credit for the Seasons medals?-ed.]

**A
COLLECTION
OF
AMERICAN EPITAPHS
AND
INSCRIPTIONS
WITH
OCCASIONAL NOTES.**

**BY REV. TIMOTHY ALDEN, A. M.
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS AND
OF THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETIES,
MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUA-
RIAN SOCIETY, ETC.**

PENTADE I. VOL. I.

There are no monuments more interesting, than the tombs of
men, especially those of our kindred. ST. PIERRE.

[SECOND EDITION.]

NEW-YORK ;

1814.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

231. *Note.*—A medal was struck in commemoration of the capitulation of lieutenant general James Burgoyne and the British army under his command at Saratoga. The original gold piece, struck at Paris and valued at ten half johannes, has on one side a fine likeness, in profile, of the American general, surrounded by the words *HORATIO GATES, DUCI STRENUO*, and at the bottom, *COMITIA AMERICANA*. On the reverse, Burgoyne, in the attitude of delivering his sword, occupies the foreground, about midway between the American and British armies, which are represented on the right and left, in the rear. Above are the words, *SAUTS REGIONUM SEPTENTRION*. and beneath, *HOSTE AD SARATOGAM IN DEDITIONE ACCEPTO, DIE XVII. OCT. M,DCC,LXXVII*. Some years since, a few of these medals, were executed in tin, at the mint in Philadelphia, and a select distribution of them was made.

[In writing his monumental work on U.S. Mint Medals, Bob Julian opined that Gates medals had been restruck in silver. There is the above documentation for restrikes in white medal but we are aware of no such support of silver examples, nor have we seen a silver medal from the later die states.—ed.]

IN THE NEWS

World's Greatest Medallion Art Exhibition Ever!

By D. WAYNE JOHNSON Copyright © 2008

Ninety-nine years ago in Autumn 1909 a small group of numismatists planned to have an exhibit of coins and medals, an international exhibit. They wanted to do something spectacular since they had just moved into a brand new museum building all their own.

Thanks to the benevolence of philanthropist Archer Milton Huntington, who had built two other museums by that time on the same track of land – the American Numismatic Society stood next to the Hispanic Society of America on Audubon Terrace – once the farm of ornithologist John James Audubon in upper Manhattan overlooking the Hudson River in New York City.

Under exhibit chairman Edgar H. Adams invitations were sent to medallion artists and mints all over the world. Response was overwhelming, so much so the resulting exhibition has been called “The Greatest Exhibition of Medallion Art Ever!”

The exhibition ran for 24 days in March 1910. It has not been surpassed since!

Even the medallion exhibitions of FIDEM, held every two years since 1949, have not come close. In theory, FIDEM exhibits are the works international medalists, engravers and diesinkers have created in the two most recent years (many artists tend to stretch that time limitation!). The ANS exhibit was the best work every world medalists had created at anytime in their career!

The ANS exhibit cases were packed and overflowing. Medallion art filled the exhibition gallery on the first floor, center cases, and a mezzanine above. The exhibition was so large the coins had to be shown in the museum next door, at the Hispanic Society (now in the news a century later for wanting \$30 million of its

coins back from ANS because they moved away).

One hundred ninety-four artists from eleven countries, three mints, three medallion societies sent medallion items for exhibit. French artists (49) sent the most, followed by native understandably artists here in America (56). Perhaps this emphasizes the fact shared by most that medallion art is a French art. German (23), Austrian (19), British (16), Belgium (11), Italian (9), Dutch (7), Spanish (2), Norwegian (1), and Swiss (1) medallion artists also participated.

No limit was placed on composition, how made, quantity, style or themes. Eight were hand engraved, 45% were struck, 30% cast and 319 (15.6%) were in galvano form. There was a handful of terracotta, porcelain, marble, wood, stone and ivory items.

IECM Statistics

Participating Countries	11
Medallion Artists Exhibiting	194
Mints Exhibiting	3
Medallion Societies Exhibiting	3

Medallion Items Exhibited	2,043
(Coins Exhibited	3,506)

Days Exhibit Open	24
Museum Buildings Involved	2
Number visitors	5,547
Catalogs Printed 2nd Edition	1,000

Types of Medallion Items Exhibited:

Struck items	44.94%	918
Cast items	30.30%	619
Galvano items	15.61%	319
Plaster models	6.75%	138
Hand engraved items	0.39%	8
Jeweled items	0.39%	8
Wax models	0.34%	7
Terracotta items	0.29%	6
Porcelain items	0.15%	3
Ivory items	0.10%	2
Other	0.73%	15

Seven items were in wax (the only requirement here was wax items had to be under glass). French medallist Louis Oscar Roty sent the most works, 83. His onetime student, American medallist Victor David Brenner, furnished 69.

Small octavo catalogs were issued before the exhibition. The catalog of coins listed 3,506 items – mostly from the Society’s collections – with eight plates in the 252-page catalog. A similar catalog listed medals; it is not, however, to be confused with the 1911 catalogue of medals, now considered a *second revised edition*. Records at ANS indicate 5,547 visitors viewed the exhibits.

Thanks to Agnes Baldwin Brett, a volunteer who oversaw the preparation of the larger quarto format medal catalogue, every item exhibited was photographed. Some items singularly, others grouped as mounted by artist for the exhibit.

She wrote a most authoritative Introduction, with a masterful understanding of the field, the history of medals and the many ways in which medallic items can be produced. She even chose to illustrate a Janvier die-engraving pantograph (at Medallic Art Company), which had been in America for only three years at the time, but it was considered the ultimate tool for coin and medal production at the beginning of the new century.

It is a miracle the massive 412-page catalogue, now with every item photographed, was published even within a year after the exhibition closed. Titled *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Contemporary Medals*, all were issued with a tan paper cover in a white cardboard box.

Printed tissue interlays for many plates identified medallic items by their catalogue number. A reply post card was inserted to mail back to ANS to indicate the purchaser of the book. One thousand copies were printed.

In conversation among numismatists, and among its scholarly references, the catalogue is cited by its title initials, “IECM.”

The IECM catalogue is in the news recently. It is now considered a classic work on medallic art, as a rare book selling for \$600 or more. The big news? Google Books has digitized a copy in the library of the University of Michigan and placed it online for anyone to examine for free.

No announcement was made after the book was digitized June 3, 2008. I happened to come across its availability while searching for galvano plaques last month. Although the book has been in my library, it seems, like forever, it is good to know it can be accessed online. It is long out-of-print and, of course, its copyright has expired allowing Google to copy it.

Access this. You will observe the original pages, it is arranged by artists alphabetically. Most illustrations are full page. Every item is shown, even if on the panel with other medals of that artist.

We wonder if a similar medal exhibit could even be mounted today. In August 2002, I sent a letter to the officers of ANS to consider a similar exhibition in 2010, eight years in the future. Medal author Katie Jaeger did the same this year following up with two emails. None of our correspondence was even answered. It appears the officials at ANS do not wish to take on such a massive project.

We may never have another “World’s Greatest Medallic Exhibition Ever!”

How To Access the IECM Catalogue On Google Books:

In Google enter INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY MEDALS. The first item to appear is the listing for the digitized book by Google Books. This is far quicker than attempting to enter its long URL:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=dEJmAAAmAAJ7printsec=frontcover&dq=Catalogue+of+the+International+Exhibition+of+Contemporary+Medals>

Letters to the Editor

September 3, 2008

Dear Mr. Adams,

Numismatists thoroughly enjoy a good mystery and the subject of the corded border Libertas Americana medals does not disappoint. When the current piece came into my possession approximately two years ago, I considered it to be an inferior variant of an original Libertas Americana medal, or Betts-615. I examined the medal closely, but could not ascertain its origin or purpose. However, a few characteristics were immediately obvious: The medal was old, it was cast from an original or, at least, a copy of an original and it was larger in diameter than the usual Libertas. The medal was subsequently consigned to Stacks as a whatisit but was summarily rejected under the premise that they do not sell copies, and understandably so. At least I had an expert

opinion that the medal was nothing more than an old cast copy. The background of this particular Libertas remained a mystery to me until the recent release of your wonderful treatise *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. On page 196 you reference a January 1996 article in *The Colonial Newsletter* by Michael Hodder regarding an identical piece:

"Its principal feature is a corded rim, on both the obverse and reverse, between the inner rim and outer rim found on other specimens. The diameter is 49.3 mm against a diameter of 47.5-48 mm found on the usual Libertas Americana medal. Hodder hypothesizes that the larger diameter is caused by an additional (corded) collar that also serves to mask the rim damage (from K.7 progressing ultimately to K.8.5 seen on other examples.)."



Clearly the Libertas medal in my possession was from the same mold as the piece observed by Hodder, if not perhaps the same specimen. The diameter of the current example is 49.3 mm and it is undeniably cast, rather than struck. As a side note, the weight is 871.0 grains. Armed with this new information

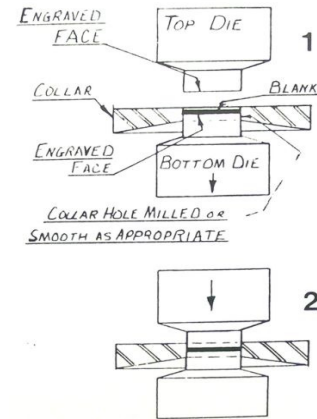
I contacted an acquaintance and numismatic researcher, John Kraljevich, via email to discuss the corded border Libertas before me. His response:

"I saw this piece among a former consignment of yours at Stacks. The medal is cast, long ago undoubtedly, but a copy

nonetheles -- that's why it was returned. The corded border is likely a bezel that contained a struck original. The definition is a bit muddy and you can see some casting pits here and there ..."

And an impasse was born. How do we explain the corded border? Was it created by the implementation of a special collar designed to hide the distracting rim break, or are the medals simple castings made from an original *Libertas Americana* medal mounted in a bezel? Since my library is missing the January 1996 edition of *The Colonial Newsletter*, I contacted another friend to request a copy of Hodder's piece on the subject. As of the time of this letter, I have not yet received the requested information, therefore I must make the disclaimer that I do not completely understand Hodder's hypothesis regarding the additional collar.

By collar I assume that Hodder was referring to two additional rings that may have been added to the upper and lower dies to increase the surface area. A collar in the traditional sense of minting serves to restrain the planchet during striking and it only affects the edge of a coin or medal. How an edge collar could have imparted an intricate, corded border design on both the obverse and reverse of a medal defies logic. Even if Hodder meant that a prototype collar (or ring) was attached to each of the obverse and reverse dies to hide the characteristic rim break at K.7, the original die would had to have been reduced in diameter to remove the damaged portion of the die. That would not have been an easy task, considering that the dies were already hardened.



From Dennis Cooper's *Coins and Minting* (1996), page 24.

Furthermore, a collar attached to an existing die could only be used for casting purposes and not to actually strike coins or medals. Dies used for striking on any press must be of a solid body construction, in my amateur opinion; the forces are too great and damage would occur in short order. It also seems that the amount of labor to produce such an elaborate contraption would have exceeded the effort required to simply produce a new set of dies. And would it not have been easier to simply remove the raised rim break on each of the finished originals than to implement a complicated collar design, considering the limited mintage of the original medals? To this point, the hypothesis of a prototype collar corded border *Libertas* medal seems less feasible.

Other factors which refute the prototype collar concept must be considered. For example, why wouldn't a simple border have been employed for prototype purposes? The corded border on the cast example is intricate, complex, and unlike any corded border design I have observed on other coins or medals, especially those dating to late 18th century France. On medals, tokens, and coins with corded rims, the work examined is far coarser. Take the circa 1795 Washington Liberty and Security pennies with corded outer rims as an example (see image). And given the intricacies of the cord feature, one would assume that the

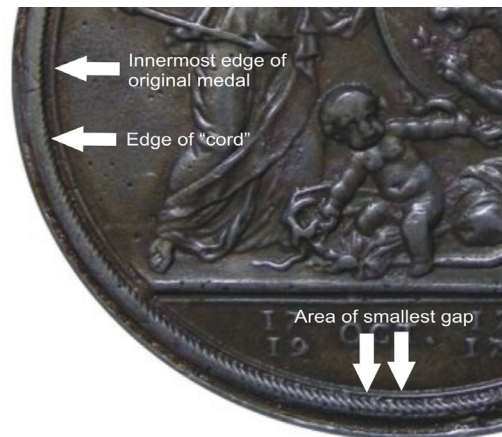
die sinker would have taken enough care to assure concentricity of the feature on both dies. In actuality, the reverse die (Minerva side) shows a varying distance between the cord feature and the innermost edge of the rim found on the original version. Interestingly, close examination shows that the omnipresent die break at K-7 may have been removed before the medal was cast. This evidence adds credibility to the cast bezel concept, as the raised lump would have prevented a flush seating of a bezel on the medal. In other words, the die break was filed away before the bezel was attached, and the corded border is not actually obscuring the flaw it simply no longer exists.

The aforementioned factors indirectly support the supposition that the corded border Libertas medals are simply cast copies of an original medal housed in a bezel, however the mystery does not end here and other questions arise. For example, why would someone ruin, or risk ruining, a bezel which must have been custom-made in order to produce low quality cast copies? Were these pieces (assuming that more than one medal was created)



manufactured as part of a commercial venture, hence the justification for the larger size and more ornate border? Since the break appears to have been manually removed before the casting process, why wouldn't the bezel have been removed in order to produce a more accurate portrayal of the original Libertas Americana

medal? The material is a base metal of some sort, possibly comprised of lead, perhaps to ease the casting process. The current example appears to be contemporary, or at least antique in terms of fabric. But the question begs: Who created these corded border medals and why? Where is the original medal that served as the host piece for the castings? Enough unique surface characteristics are present to match the copies to the host medal, assuming it is still extant, if an effort is made to do so.



Perhaps the images, opinions, and questions presented here will lead to new information regarding these enigmatic pieces. I have other observations that I would be pleased to share with you, including, but not limited to, die orientation and clues regarding the possible era of production. In the meantime I look forward to your thoughts regarding this matter, which I value highly.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Tarrant

[In his January 1996 article in *The Colonial Newsletter*, Michael Hodder asked for comments on this intriguing piece and, apparently, never got any. Now, Dennis Tarrant has supplied a wealth of new information which, hopefully, will elicit responses from our readership. Someone

went to a wealth of trouble to make the matrix of this cast. Whether or not Dennis' theories on manufacture are correct, the central mystery remains "Why?"—ed.]

Dear Ms. Bentley,

I recently began sorting through a collection of medals originating from the former Wesleyan Museum (c. 1871-1956), and I am using your and Mr. Adams 2007 volume to assist with the identification of a Daniel Morgan/Battle of Cowpens medal. Based on the absence of some of the flaws you note, I would say it was made from the 1839 copy dies. Our piece is 56.5 mm greatest diameter. It appears to be gold, but weighs only 68.3 g; in this it is more comparable to the bronze pieces listed in your census.

I am curious--apart from the replacement medal given to Morgan L. Neville, were any other gold, or gold-plated copies ever struck from the 1839 dies? I'd initially understood that only a single gold medal was produced (and so was very surprised to see what one looks like!), but my knowledge of medals (and metals) is limited. I do plan on tracking down some of the other sources listed in your bibliography (e.g., the R. W. Julian volume), but if you have a chance, I would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Juliana Shortell

Juliana Shortell 860-685-2085
Collections Manager
Archaeology Program
Wesleyan University
Middletown, CT 06459

Dear Ms. Shortell:

I'm forwarding your enquiry to John Adams, who is the real expert in this duo! John -- over to you...

Anne

Dear Ms. Shortell,

Anne modestly forwarded your inquiry to me. It sounds like your Morgan medal was gilt, a common occurrence with British medals but decidedly uncommon on pieces from this side of the Atlantic. If the gilding is of high quality (i.e. if it is smooth, bright and not flaking), then I would suspect that your medal was made for another relative. Although John Paul Jones requested three examples of his medal in gold, Jefferson denied this request as would have any of his successors. Gold was for the hero only.

I hope this helps. If other questions occur, contact either Anne or myself.

Sincerely,

John Adams

Dear Mr. Adams,

Thank you for taking the time to respond, and for helping to solve this puzzle. Our piece is, indeed, in beautiful shape--bright and smooth (but for the weight I would have taken it for solid gold). It was found stored in a red and gilt book-style holder lined with blue (satin?) fabric.

Are there Mint records of how many, when, and for whom such gilded copies were made? I'm trying to pin down likely dates for our piece and get some sense of its relative historical importance and/or interest to the professional community. As it probably quite evident, this is not my area of expertise, but I'd like to start making my colleagues aware of the historical and pedagogical value of our medal collection (which has been "lost" in storage for

over fifty years, and needs quite a bit of attention). Thank you again for your time. I've really enjoyed reading *Comitia Americana* and getting re-acquainted with various historical figures from a completely different perspective!

Best wishes,
Juliana

After checking with Bob Julian, we added the following:

Juliana - There are no records from the 19th century of the U.S. Mint gilding anything, although I am sure that Franklin Peale, who made beautiful electrotypes, was capable of doing the work. He operated more or less sub rosa and kept few records. More likely, in my opinion, is that the owner of the piece took it to a jeweler and had the work and the box done there. Whether Peale or a jeweler, the fact remains that a material expense was incurred in order to create a very special memorial. If there is any way to trace your original donor, that path might lead to a marvelous story.

Best, John

Good evening Mr. Tayman,

I was hoping that you might be able to direct me to the correct person to contact at Medal Collectors of America with regard to a collection of musical medals we are offering for sale at auction in November which we believe may be of interest to your membership.

The 100 year old medal collection being offered includes works by the famous medalists and sculptors Pierre-Jean David d'Angers and Alexandre-Louis-Marie Charpentier and stylistically covers the Secessionist, Art Deco and Art Nouveau periods.

I have attached a copy of the press release (together with some background about

Pierre-Jean David d'Angers and Alexandre-Louis-Marie Charpentier.

Kind regards,

Caroline Newton
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11 Adelphi Terrace
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Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (1788-1856)

David defined the tradition of the standing portrait for both historical and contemporary personalities, made the definitive break with international Neo-classicism and as the creator of some six hundred portraits was the most prolific of Western portraitists, five hundred or more of them being medallions. 'The great master was the first to revive the medallic art as understood in the fifteenth century, and to give to his portraits of bronze, expression, reality and life' (*Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, compiled by L. Forrer). His bust of Paganini (1830-1833) is 'arguably the greatest of Romanticism' (*The Romantics to Rodin*). Authoritative critics and intellectuals during his lifetime pronounced him the most representative sculptor of his age. His 'life and work make him the most eloquent witness of the period.' (H.W. Janson, *Nineteenth-century Sculpture*, 1986). Rodin recognised David to have been a great sculptor though he thought that he had not produced a great masterpiece on the same level as his own. Victor Hugo wrote in *Les Rayons et les Ombres*: 'Michel-Ange avait Rome, et David a Paris.'

He is perhaps as much remembered now for his speciality in portrait medallions as for his sculptures. The medallions were one-sided and not minted, but were modelled for

sand casting. Very 'few were commissioned or indeed even commercial, for David's altruistic, didactic purpose -- unique but symptomatic of the period -- was to accumulate a gallery of great and admirable men and women for the edification of his contemporaries, and especially of posterity.' At first he made them solely for the private use of his models but he came to see them as a 'Gallery of Great Men' (begun in 1827) and as an enduring didactic encyclopaedia. Most of them (except of course the historical ones) were done from life, with him making several journeys abroad to portray foreign luminaries. De Caso (*David d'Angers*, 1992) notes that David left his founders free to disseminate his medallions, the first being Louis Richard and Eck and Durand, then Thiébaut and the Fumière foundry. Janson specially singles out the Fumière posthumous casts as very satisfactory and also states that many 'fine and demonstrably early casts have no founders' marks.'

'David d'Angers will remain a great figure in the History of Art of the XIXth century...he belongs especially to that school of sculpture that delights in blending the spirit of Greek Art with the forms required to give historical accuracy to the impersonations of our period. He has brought sculpture to be most useful to society at large, by modelling hundreds of medallions of the celebrated men of his age, in which he has not only attained a rare degree of external resemblance, but also succeeded in unmistakably fixing the most recondite features of character.' (Forrer). He was responsible for taking the medallic art into the field of sculpture and primarily responsible for the revival of the cast medallion in France.

Mark Jones in *The Art of the Medal*, 1979, states that David d'Angers's 'medals represent a total break with the conventional approach towards medallic portraiture which recorded a subject in terms of his achievements or his position in society. They reflect a fundamental change of attitude which, totally contrary to practice in previous centuries, led

the Romantics to regard the individual, at least in theory, as defined solely by his personal attributes and not in any way by his place in the "natural order".' Jeremy Cooper in *Nineteenth-century Romantic Bronzes*, 1975, considers the medallions to have been of 'crucial importance because they gave unprecedented attention to contemporary man in his natural habitat. Before David d'Angers, and indeed for a long time after, man was honoured in idealised sculpture with obtuse philosophical reference to the classical hero, whereas these bronze portraits...for the first time in sculpture acknowledged the absolute relevance of the natural appearance and inner emotions of the living man.'

The feature of adding the sitter's signature in facsimile further emphasised the individuality of the person; 'In the reproduced signature, David saw an analogue of physiognomy and therefore of character' (Jacques de Caso, *David d'Angers*, 1992, p. 173). 'Such facsimiles appear in all medallions except those where the artist was unable to procure a sample' (H.W. Janson, *Nineteenth-century Sculpture*, 1985).

Nearly all David's medallions are profiles which he considered more expressive because more comprehensive. He himself wrote: 'I have always been profoundly stirred by a profile. The [full] face looks at us; the profile is in relation with other beings. It is going to shun you; it doesn't even see you. The [full] face shows you several characteristics, and it is more difficult to analyse. The profile is unity.' Or, 'the profile of the visage gives the reality of life, whereas the [full] face gives only the fiction.' (*The Romantics to Rodin*, edited by Peter Fusco and H.W. Janson, 1980). It is also true that people adjust expressions on their full face to affect their audience; being less aware of their profile, it tends to tell its own story, and in any case is less subject to control or manipulation.

'David's medallion portraits seem designed to take full advantage of the bronze.

They are meant to be viewed at arm's length, played against the light to vary the reflections and explore their almost limitless wealth of expressive effects.' (H.W. Janson, *Nineteenth-century Sculpture*).

Medallion portraits by David are now rare and only occasionally appear on the market. The selection in this catalogue is the largest group to emerge for many years. They are exceptional for the general excellence of their colour, patination and condition.

Alexandre-Louis-Marie

Charpentier (1856–1909)

Medalist, sculptor, and cabinetmaker, Alexandre Charpentier was a versatile artist who experimented with an array of materials, from those traditionally used in sculpture, such as bronze, silver, and clay, to more unusual ones such as glass and leather. His major concerns centred around maternity and children, labor, portraiture, and the decorative arts. Charpentier sculpted numerous portraits of children and domestic scenes of mothers with infants. *Maternity* (or *Young Mother Nursing*), made in 1882, was one of his earliest compositions to depict this subject. After earning an honorable mention at the Paris Salon of 1883, where it was exhibited in plaster, *Maternity* was commissioned in marble by the French government for the state collection.

The work became one of Charpentier's most successful compositions, one that he would translate into a variety of media in future decades. Among the more unusual examples is a terracotta version with a rich iridescent glaze produced by the renowned experimental ceramicist Emile Muller, who executed other terracotta works by the artist. In the 1890s Charpentier began including his metal plaquettes as decorative elements on furniture that he designed and built. For example, he adorned the front of a nursery dresser from 1893 with plaquettes of *Maternity* and another subject, *Jean and Pierre*. The latter composition

was also used as a cover for a pencil box. In this double portrait, Charpentier depicted his son (*Jean*) and nephew (*Pierre*) with exaggerated, caricature like features. In contrast to the humorous portraits of the infant boys, the artist sculpted his daughter *Thérèse* as a poised young girl wearing her hair in braided loops. The portrait appeared on a rectangular bronze medal made for the Society of Friends of the French Medal in 1899 and bears on its reverse a miniature version of *Maternity*.

Labor reforms in the late nineteenth century drew attention to the dignity of the worker. Many European sculptors made field workers and miners the subject of public monuments. Charpentier took a broad approach to this theme, depicting manual labourers operating machines as well as doctors in hospitals performing surgeries and delivering babies. Several of Charpentier's reliefs illustrate techniques and processes used to create sculptures and medals. For example, two versions of *Metalsmith* show a young man filing an object—perhaps a medal—held in a vice. Similarly, a scene with a man operating a screw press, a machine used to strike medals, advertises one of the leading French medal manufacturing firms. The reverse of this octagonal medal displays three miniature versions of this same scene, a clever reference to the processes of replication and reduction, which were essential to the production of medals. Significantly, this particular firm was known for its invention of a device used to reduce artists' designs to the size of medals. A small silver medal, issued as a souvenir for ascending the Eiffel Tower, depicts on one side a distant view of Paris from the height of the tower's observation platform, while eloquently paying homage on the other side to the thousands of iron workers who built the tower between 1887 and 1889. The scene of the three iron riveters also appears embossed on a swatch of leather, which the artist intended for a book cover.

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100 Years of Musical Medals to be Sold at Auction

Little is known about Paul Niggel, the collector of an extraordinarily extensive set of 1068 musical medals being offered for sale by Baldwin's Auctions, but his life long passion for a range of musicians and composers and their portrayal in medals formed the backbone of his book, *Muiker Medallien*, published in 1965 and obviously inspired his second work *Grosse Dirigenten auf Medallion*, published in 1967.

The collection was begun by Karl Andorfer and Richard Epstein and was published as *Musica in Nummis* in 1907. It was subsequently purchased by Niggel of Amsterdam who, in collecting medals of any musician he came across to add to the collection, was able to obtain a number of very rare and very fine pieces by renowned portrait artists. This auction of his collection offers a portrait of Claude Joseph Rouget de L'Isle, the composer of 'Marseillaise', the French national anthem, by the prominent medallist and sculptor Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (lot 53) and a beautifully sculpted bust of violinist, composer and conductor Eugène Ysaÿe crafted by Alexandre- Louis-Marie Charpentier (lot 42). Medals by both of these artists are very rare and seldom offered for sale on the open market.

Stylistically the medals cover the Secessionist, Art Deco and Art Nouveau periods and there are a number of contemporary pieces commemorating anniversaries of births and deaths. Highlights of the collection include a medal depicting Richard Strauss, famous composer of the 1936 "Olympische Hymne" who had rather unfortunately lost his position as President of the Reichsmusikammer by the time the games came around (lot 132), and a intricately fashioned medal of the mezzo-soprano opera star Faustina Bordoni, infamously remembered for her very public on-stage row with her rival Madam Cuzzini in 1726 when Caroline, Princess of Wales, was in the audience (lot 160).

Sold previously in 1998 as a single lot a few of the pieces have since been sold, but Baldwin's cataloguers maintain this is still the most comprehensive collection of musical medals that they are aware of. The extensively illustrated catalogue with index of both sitters and medallists will undoubtedly ensure it stands alongside *Musiker Medallien* as a work of reference.

The collection forms part of a 750 lot public auction of coins and medals due to be sold at auction as part of the UK's largest Numismatic fair, The London Coin Fair on Saturday 8th November. The auction begins at 2pm GMT and is open to the public for participation. The lots are available to view from 9am at the fair to be held at The Holiday Inn Hotel, Russell Square, Bloomsbury, London, or by appointment at A. H. Baldwin & Sons Ltd in the 2 weeks prior to the auction. The extensively illustrated catalogue can be viewed online at www.sixbid.com and Live Internet Bidding is available through www.the-saleroom.com. For more information about the collection or any of the other lots available in the sale please contact Seth Freeman on +44(0)207 9309808 or at auctions@baldwin.co.uk

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